

REMARKS

This Amendment, filed in reply to the Office Action dated June 23, 2006, is believed to be fully responsive to each point of rejection raised therein. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

Claim 1-13 remain pending in the application. Claims 1-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Kakutani et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,356,358). Claims 12 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kakutani et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,356,358) in view of Mackin et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,262,937). Applicant respectfully submits the following comments in traversal of the prior art rejections.

The Examiner maintains the rejections over Kakutani and offers rebuttal to previously submitted arguments. Applicant emphasizes that the current claims describe the offset of at least two colors in the subscanning direction and relative to a start position for recording another one of said colors, where the amount of offset is in a range of one spot to a number of spots.

The Examiner's continued reliance on Fig. 5A of Kakutani as teaching the above features is incorrect. In particular, the Examiner cites the precedent spots 100, 101, 102 and 103 of a color head 61 and assumes that the same precedent spots 100, 101, 102 and 103 also designate similarly located spots in a color head 64. The Examiner points out that nozzles 100, 102 receive their drive signals ahead of nozzles 101, 103. The Examiner then contends that because nozzle 103 of head 64 would receive its corresponding drive signal later than the drive signal for nozzle 102 of head 61, that there is a shift in the subscanning direction relative to the start position of the two colors as claimed. This is incorrect.

Even assuming *arguendo* that there is time shift between activation of the nozzle 103 of head 64 and nozzle 102 of head 61, the start positions the colors in the subscan direction (due to activation of nozzles 102 in both heads 61 and 64) will not be offset in the subscanning direction. The Examiner is not permitted to assume that nozzles 102 of all the heads (61-63) do not operate in any given raster line for scanning in the main scan direction. The temporal offset in activation of the nozzles 102, for example, would not result in a spatial offset in the spots produced by the nozzles 102. The mere shift in operating time does not mean that there will be a resultant shift in the sub-scanning direction for a start position for recording the colors.

The Examiner's continued reliance on Fig. 7A as teaching the claimed feature is also unwarranted. As previously discussed, Fig. 7A relates to scanning of by multiple nozzles of a single color. Any positional offsets of the nozzles in Fig. 7A are irrelevant to the claims which describe offset of two colors. The Examiner has yet to explain how Fig. 7A relates to different colors. Applicant submits that the Fig. 7A relates to formation of a raster line. One skilled in the art would not expect raster lines to be formed of individually different colors for each of nozzles 0, 1, 2, 3. This type of arrangement would lead to colored and streak-lined images for a color image. Therefore, the Examiner's continued reliance on Fig. 7A cannot support the rejection.

Claim 2 is allowable based on analogous recitations as discussed above, and the remaining claims are patentable based on their dependency.

With further regard to claims 12-13, the secondary reference of Mackin does not make up for the above deficiencies.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appln. No. 09/704,724

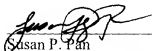
Attorney Docket No. Q61576

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860


Susan P. Pinn
Registration No. 41,239

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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CUSTOMER NUMBER

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